

# House Education & the Workforce Committee

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# ISSUE SUMMARY

## **H.R. 1 Enhances Education Technology Programs**

Education technology can be a powerful means of improving student achievement. States and local school districts are already experimenting with promising technology programs -- from online research services to distance learning initiatives -- and President Bush believes that such innovation should be encouraged by the federal government and bolstered by federal funding.

But, according to the General Accounting Office (GAO), there are 35 federal programs spread across eight different agencies that could support telecommunications and information technology programs at local schools and libraries. Moreover, according to recent survey by the National Center for Education Statistics, only 20 percent of American teachers feel prepared to use new computer applications and know how to integrate them into their classrooms.

**The federal government should not attach too many strings to education technology funding; states and local schools are laboratories of innovation. Therefore, H.R. 1 streamlines and consolidates federal education technology programs into a performance-based grant program that sends more money directly to schools.**

- Today's high-tech economy requires an educated and skilled workforce, and promoting innovative state and local education technology programs will help ensure the long-term growth of high technology.
- In 1995, the major technology programs under Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) were funded at combined level of \$50 million; today, they account for \$872 million.
- H.R. 1 consolidates these programs into an education technology grant available to states based on how much Title I funding they receive and their relative population of individuals ages 5-17.
- The Bush plan allows states and local school districts to target education technology funding toward the specific needs of individual schools.
- By eliminating duplicative programs, the bill ensures that schools will not have to submit multiple grant applications and waste precious dollars on administrative expenses.
- H.R. 1 improves and expands programs that train teachers to use education technology.
- Giving states and local school districts flexibility to develop innovative education technology programs will increase student achievement.